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CHRISTIAN DEMONOLOGY.

II.

WE have next to consider the beliefs of Origen, the most philosophical of the Fathers of the Church, who reflects the opinion of the cultivated Alexandrian Church during the first half of the third century.

According to Origen¹, the problem of the beginning of Origen's evil is so bound up with that of the revolt of views. the Devil and his so-called angels, that it cannot be understood apart therefrom. Without, however, going deeper into the question of first beginnings, Origen is content to state that the Devil was not always the Devil, and that the demons are creatures of God, so far forth as they are in a manner rational beings (*λογικοί τινες*).

That all demons are evil, says Origen², is an opinion Demons held not only by us (i.e. by Christians), but evil. by nearly every one who affirms their existence at all. And as they are all bad, it cannot be said that all things have their law from the Supreme God. For the demons, through their own wickedness and badness, have fallen away from the divine law and follow the law of sin.

These demons have cajoled men into worshipping them, Demons have taken names which their votaries are care- half ful to ascertain ; and they have various powers³ material. and favourite charms and herbs which they individually prefer, as well as different forms which admit of symbolical portraiture on engraved stones. We see that Origen attributed outward form and also bodies of

¹ *C. Cels.* bk. iv. § 65.² *Ibid.* vii. 69.³ *Ibid.* viii. 61.

a kind to demons: "their body," he says¹, "is naturally subtile and thin as air (*naturaliter subtile et velut aura tenue*); wherefore many opine them to be incorporeal." In the New Testament, as we saw, demons are held to be without flesh or bones, and so far incorporeal. Nor is Origen really in conflict with this opinion, for his demons are made of the "material spirit" (*ex spiritu materiali*), of which Tertullian² had declared all angels—good and bad alike—to consist.

The grossness, says Origen, of many sorts (*παχύτητες*) which they contract from earth³ and from the lower air. Demons haunt the lower air. myriad evils of earth, weigh down the demons⁴ and prevent their rising from the earthly localities, which they have chosen, into the purer and more divine regions of the sky. So far, however, as they do haunt the air⁵, they cause plagues and droughts and bad seasons, and the rough weather in which the poor mariners perish. All such demons are averted by the death of the one just Messiah, an act of self-sacrifice which Origen does not hesitate to parallel from the similar acts of those who of old allowed themselves to be sacrificed to avert plagues or bad harvests or adverse winds. It is these aerial demons also that make revelations to man by means of augury.

On the other hand, many of them are cast down and punished with imprisonment under ground. And of such the hot springs⁶ that well up in many places were the tears, according to Celsus, the assailant of Christianity, with whom Origen was not inclined to differ on such a point.

The localities⁷ most affected by demons are, says Origen, temples and shrines, where incense is burned and blood offerings made. For the demons are not so immaterial as that they can do without food⁸, and they find it in the fumes and reek and blood

¹ *De Princ.* i. 95 (ed. Redepen).

² *C. Marc.*, lib. 2.

³ *C. Cels.* iii. 36.

⁴ *Exh. ad Martyr.* 45.

⁵ *C. Cels.* i. 31.

⁶ *Ibid.* v. 52.

⁷ *Ibid.* vii. 35, 64.

⁸ *Ibid.* vii. 56.

of the slaughtered animals¹. Here note that the Jewish idea of the blood being the life recurs. The blood, says Origen, is separated from the flesh before we eat it, for fear lest demons be nurtured on it along with ourselves.

Things This, he says, is why the Word forbids Christians
strangled. to eat things strangled. For the blood, he says, is rightly held to be the food of the demons (*τροφή δαιμόνων*).

The grounds upon which the Clementine *Recognitions* (bk. iv, ch. 18) inculcate fasting and strict abstinence from over-eating are similar. If we over-eat, the demons enter into us with the food which we cannot digest. And when we eat things offered to idols, says the same book, the demon or evil spirit, which by the heathen rites has been put into the food, enters therewith directly into our bodies. Thus the demons batten on the souls of the victims slain, and the gods of the heathen² are gluttonous demons (*λίχνα δαίμονια*). Thus the slaughter of victims is in itself enough to lure the demons to the heathen temples. But even without that, they can be attracted to a place and *laid*³ therein by use of certain incantations and black arts (*κατακλίσεις δι' ἐπωδῶν καὶ μαγανειῶν*).

Unless the demons have the blood and reek of sacrifice to snuff and lick up, they grow weak and torpid
Why wicked to sacrifice to demons. and impotent for evil⁴. Hence the peculiar wickedness of sacrificing to them, as do apostates in time of persecution. Such renegades give a fillip to the life of the demons that are the unseen foes of mankind, and so commit a worse sin than if they fed and kept brigands and outlaws and other visible enemies of the emperor and of society.

On such grounds Origen explains the enmity of Celsus, the early critic of Christianity, towards the
Celsus inspired by demons. faith. He was inspired by some hungry demon, whose altar had been forsaken, and who was

¹ *C. Cels.* viii. 30.

² *Ibid.* iii. 37.

³ *Ibid.* iii. 34 ; vii. 64, 69 ; viii. 61.

⁴ *Exh. ad Martyr.* 45.

therefore suffering starvation through the preaching of Christ¹. The demons, says Origen, equally instigate emperors and senate to persecute², in order to destroy a religion which threatens to starve them out. But every martyr that resists administers a blow to the demons from which they do not recover for a long time. Hence the long intervals between great persecutions. Again, the sorrow displayed by judges when a martyr suffers torture, and their joy when he recants, is not due to human sympathy on their part, but is a reflex of the emotions felt by the demons on such occasions.

Like Justin Martyr, his predecessor, Origen regards the main work of Jesus as having lain in his successful struggle with the demons, who after his advent no more held undisputed sway over mankind³. "The voluntary death and self-sacrifice of Jesus, of the one just man for the many, in a mysterious way averts and turns away the activity of the evil demons." And Origen loves to dwell on the exclusiveness, or, as some moderns might put it, the intolerance of the Christian religion. No half-allegiance was allowable. The demons might be and were tolerant of each other's honours and activity; Heracles is not jealous of the cult of Pollux, nor Jupiter of Apollo's; but Jesus aspired to sole empire over men's souls, and so forbade the cult of any god or hero other than himself⁴. And in him, says Origen, the demons recognize their conqueror⁵, in his name an influence with which they cannot cope. Echoing the statement of St. Peter in the Acts, Origen declares that in every cure which he wrought, Jesus destroyed myriads of demons⁶.

Thus an Homeric war is in Origen's mind for ever being waged between God and his angels on the one side, and the Devil and his demons on the other. In this war every man must take a

¹ *C. Cels.* vii. 56.

⁴ *Ibid.* iii. 35.

² *Ibid.* viii. 43, 44.

⁵ *Ibid.* iii. 36.

³ *Ibid.* i. 31.

⁶ *Cp. Acts* x. 38.

side¹; and if he will only brave the enmity of the demons, he will secure the support and aid of all the powers of good.

From the fact that Christ's mission was primarily to save man from the demons, Origen also derives an argument against Docetism, i. e. the early belief that Jesus was only a man in semblance and not in reality. Christ must have come in the flesh and was no mere appearance, because otherwise he could not have got at the demons, so to speak, on their own ground; for demons² are not afraid of the name of a mere phantasm (*φάνσμα*). St. Athanasius (*de Incarn.*, Migne, xxv. p. 140) goes further in the same path of reasoning, and argues that Jesus was crucified rather than decapitated or sawn asunder, because the Ruler of the Power of Evil dwells in the air, and he only that is crucified dies in the air. By so dying *aloft*, the Lord cast down the Devil "like a flash of lightning," purified the air, and so "cleared for us a road by which we may mount to heaven." Just because he came³ to liberate all who are oppressed by the devil (Acts x. 38), Jesus declared (John xvi. 11) that "now is the prince of this world judged." And Christians, continues Origen, still have a remedy against demons: they can drive them by prayer and lessons (*μαθήματα*) from Holy Scripture, not only out of men's souls, but—and mark this—out of animals as well⁴. For demons often conspire for the ruin of animals as well as of human beings.

The Jews had believed, and Origen hardly disputed this point with them, that circumcision averted the activity of a malign angel or demon. But ever since the advent of Jesus, circumcision had lost this magic efficacy⁵.

It was now the calling out of the name of Jesus⁶ along with the recitation of the histories about him, Exorcism through the name. and nothing else, which drove the demons out of men, especially when the reciters recited them

¹ *C. Cels.* viii. 64.

² *Ibid.* vii. 35.

³ *Ibid.* viii. 54.

⁴ *Ibid.* vii. 67.

⁵ *Ibid.* v. 48.

⁶ *Ibid.* i. 6.

honestly and with genuine belief. Such a formula of exorcism we quoted above from Justin, and the constant use of the *name* to exorcise demons in the church of his age is testified to by Origen in no less than six passages in the single work against Celsus. Of these I select the following: "Even still the name of Jesus takes away ecstasies or fits of madness (*ἐκστάσεις*) from the minds

of men, and expels demons, yea, and diseases as well¹." And this: "The Creator of all things² . . . ordained him (Jesus) to deserve

honour not only from such men as desire to be right minded, but also from demons and other unseen powers. Demons and men alike up to the present time display respectively either their fear of the name of Jesus as stronger than themselves, or their reverential acquiescence in his rule as in accordance with their laws."

"For unless Christ's nature and composition (*σύντασις*) had been bestowed on him from God, the demons would never yield to the mere mention of his name, and retire from the victims of their enmity." "There are those," he says in yet another passage³, "who in their cures show clearly that they have acquired, through this faith of ours, miraculous powers; for they invoke over those who need to be healed nothing else except the Supreme God and the name of Jesus along with the history of him." Elsewhere he attests⁴ that he had with his own eyes seen miracles thus worked by Christians.

We may ask: Why had the name of Jesus such effect?

Why had certain other titles the same, in particular that of "God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob," at the mention of which, says Origen (in agreement with Justin), the demons are cowed and overcome? The reason assigned by Origen is sufficiently simple. The unseen powers, he declares, *must* come when they are called—whether it be God or Christ

¹ *C. Cels.* i. 67.

² *Ibid.* iii. 36.

³ *Ibid.* iii. 24.

⁴ *Ibid.* ii. 8; i. 2, 26; vii. 4; viii. 58.

or Demon that is invoked—provided only they be properly addressed and by their true names, and in a tongue which they are familiar with and understand.

Certain sounds and syllables, says Origen¹, and certain titles pronounced with aspiration or without, pronounced long or short, bring at once to us, by some incomprehensible nature inherent in them, the persons summoned. For names are not conventionally (θέσει) given to the things they denote, but belong to them by a natural and highly mysterious affinity. It is in accordance with a certain ineffable analogy (ἀπόρρητος λόγος) that the names of Sabaoth or Adonai have been assigned to God²; or those of Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael to certain angels. “The same abstruse philosophy of names is,” adds Origen, “respected and observed by our Jesus also, whose name has ere now been plainly seen to drive thousands of demons out of souls and bodies by its energy and inner influence working upon those from whom the devils were driven.” We see most clearly from such a passage as this, that the use of the name of Jesus Christ in prayers and exorcisms was in Origen’s regard the same in principle as the use of any other name in Jewish and pagan formulae. The sole difference was that devils were more afraid of Christ, their future judge, than they were of Jupiter or Solomon.

It is therefore sinful, argues Origen, to suppose with Celsus that Zeus is but another name for the Highest God³. For it is right to call God by no other names than those of Sabaoth, Adonai, Saddai, or, again, by the title of God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by which Moses, the servant of God and the prophets, and our Lord knew Him. Zeus is merely the title of a greedy and incompetent demon, and to apply it to God would be the direst blasphemy. In spite of such purism, however, Origen⁴ would allow inhabitants of the Scythian desert and other barbarians to call

Each Power
to be called
by its right
name,

¹ *Exh. ad Martyr.* § 46.

² *C. Cels.* i. 25.

³ *Exh. ad Martyr.* § 46.

⁴ *C. Cels.* v. 46.

God by the names, e.g. Pappaeus, assigned in their vernaculars, just because they mean well and know no better.

Nor, he insists, in invoking God is it well to call him by a paraphrase. For example, in any incantation, no matter whose, the name Sabaoth followed by the connatural train of words (*συμφυοῦς ἐῖρημοῦ*), and with such titles added as skilful exorcists are acquainted with, will effect a result; but if, instead of Sabaoth, we substitute the Greek paraphrase of the Hebrew word, and say, "Lord of powers," then no effect will be produced. And the same rule, continues Origen¹, applies to demons as to the Most High God. If a demon or a man has a Greek name from birth, we can only cause him to do or suffer something by adhering to that name. We must not translate it into Egyptian or Latin. Conversely in incantations, you must not translate a Latin name into Greek. If you do, it becomes nerveless and impotent. Hence a general rule²: every demon must be addressed by his local name; and some have Egyptian, and others Persian designations. And these names have, says Origen, a certain potency, if pronounced with the string of titles connatural to them (*λεγόμενα μετὰ τινος τοῦ συμφυοῦς αὐτοῖς ἐῖρημοῦ*)³, as the wise men of the Egyptians, or the Brahmans of India or Samanaei, well know how to do. For so-called magic, says Origen, is far from being the unsubstantial thing which Epicurean and Aristotelian sceptics imagine it to be. On the contrary, it is a very substantial reality, and has mysterious doctrines (*λόγους*) known to very few. After adducing such arguments as these from the Fathers of the Church, I hope I shall not be accused of irreverence, when later on I assimilate the use of the name of Jesus Christ to ancient magic in general. Origen is not the only Father who so assimilates it. I merely follow the example set by them.

¹ *C. Cels.* v. 45.

² *Ibid.* i. 25.

³ *Ibid.* i. 24.

Just because proper names are not accidental, and because the qualities and peculiarities of sounds. quite apart from their meanings, have in themselves a certain potency in regard to one reality or another, it is plainly wrong, argues Origen¹, for Christians to call God Zeus, or by any other foreign name. And they are ready to die rather than do so. For to do so, would only gratify the demons who are longing to be called by a more exalted name than really belongs to them, just because it gratifies their ambition.

Origen further tells us², that in his day even private and unprofessional persons (*ιδιωται*) could expel demons from men's souls and bodies by mere prayer and simple kinds of adjurations, without recourse to wizardry or magic, or any use of drugs and potions. The stress here laid on the fact that *unprofessional* exorcism was so successful, implies that there was already a recognized order of exorcists in the Christian Church, though we only read of them for the first time in the Canons of the Council of Antioch³. But, as we saw above, Justin Martyr testifies⁴ to their existence both among the pagans and Jews as a regular order. Such a regular order of exorcists must of necessity soon have arisen also in the Church, since in baptism the evil spirits in a catechumen had to be driven out before the Holy Spirit could enter into him; in accordance with what we learned from Hermas, there is no room in the same vessel for both at once. Thus Cyril⁵ of Jerusalem says that without exorcism the soul cannot be purged (*ἀνευ ἐπορκισμοῦ οὐ δύναται καθαρθῆναι ψυχὴ*). And the terms *Purgari et Baptizari* are conjoined in the Sentent. Episcop. of the Council of Carthage, A.D. 256⁶.

In the Apostolic Constitutions⁷ it is decreed that the exorcists be not ordained, unless their services are wanted as bishop, presbyter, or deacon. The reason given is that

¹ *C. Cels.* i. 25.² *Ibid.* vii. 4.³ *Can. 10, Conc. An.*⁴ Justin M., *Apol.* ii. 6, p. 45; *Dial.* 311 D.⁵ *Procat.* 9.⁶ *Cypr. Ed. Hartl.* p. 441.⁷ *Const. Apost.* 8, *Can.* 26.

the power of expelling demons and the χάρισμα, or grace of healings, are declared by the revelation of God, and depend on the visitation of the Holy Spirit. Septimius¹ assails certain heretical women for daring to exorcise. In Origen's age the professional exorcists were fairly numerous in the Roman church, and seem to have formed a regular grade. For Eusebius² records that in the middle of the third century (A. D. 251) there were in Rome fifty-two exorcists with readers and doorkeepers, to forty-six presbyters. In all the Christian churches we find regular rituals of exorcism, to be used as occasion requires. In the Eastern churches, and more rarely in the Latin communion, they are still in use.

There used to be a ritual of exorcism in the English Prayer-book, but for many generations it has
Exorcism in English Church. ceased to be printed in it. So thoroughly has the old belief in possession by demons faded out of the minds of our cultivated classes. We must go to our ritualistic priests, or to the wildest and most superstitious parts of Ireland, if we would still find in existence a belief upon which, nevertheless, almost more than on any other, early Christianity hinged, and which, though forgotten, still underlies the rite of Baptism.

The idea that sickness is due to Satan is also traceable in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick, in which the minister prays to God to defend the sick "from the danger of the enemy." But in the rest of this very beautiful and touching service the sufferer is assured that his sickness is God's visitation.

The exorcism was effected in the early Church not only by adjuration and use of the name along with short recitals of the history of Jesus, but the touch and afflatus, or on-breathing, of the exorcist was necessary. The Arabic Canons of Hippolytus (Canon 19, § 6, and Canon 29) further enjoin the exorcist, after the adjurations, to sign with the cross the breast, forehead, ears, and mouth of the

¹ *De Praescr. Haeret.* cap. 41.

² *H. E.* vi. 43.

person afflicted. Lactantius (*Div. Inst.* iv. 27) refers to the use of the *signum passionis* or cross in exorcism. The patient lay flat on the ground (Origen, *Hom. in Matt.* 13, § 7). In the *Directorium Anglicanum*, a manual for the use of the English Church, we find a form given from the Exeter pontifical for the exorcism of water, as follows: "I exorcise thee, creature of water, in the name of God the Father Almighty, and in the name of Jesus Christ His Son our Lord, and in the virtue of the Holy Ghost, to become water exorcised, to chase away all the power of the enemy, and to be able to uproot and overthrow the enemy himself and his apostate angels; by the virtue of the same Lord Jesus Christ, who will come to judge the quick and the dead, and the world by fire." Salt is similarly exorcised, and so also are even flowers before being used to decorate the Church, as witness the following, which, I am told, is commonly used on Palm Sunday in those English Churches of which the hierophants desire to re-introduce in England the superstitions of a bygone age. It is, with unconscious irony, called a formula of "Blessing of Flowers and Branches," and runs as follows: "I exorcise thee, creature of flowers and branches, in the name of God the Father Almighty, in the name of Jesus Christ His Son our Lord, and in the power of the Holy Ghost. Henceforth, thou whole might of the adversary, thou whole inroad of evil spirits, be rooted up and pulled out from these creatures of flowers and branches, that thou pursue not with thy wiles the footsteps of those hastening to attain unto the grace of God. Through Him, who shall come to judge the quick and the dead, the world by fire" (p. 327 of the *Directorium Anglicanum*, edited by F. G. Lee, 1866).

Before I pass to the evidences of demonological belief contained in Jewish literature, I venture to quote a description of demoniac possession such as was still to be witnessed in Jerusalem in the fourth century from Cyril, who was bishop and head of the

Christian community there from A.D. 351-380. He is distinguishing the several sorts of spirit, and how they should be called¹. "If you speak of spirit in connexion with the human soul, you add 'of man,' and say, spirit (*pneuma*) of man. If you are speaking of the wind, you say, spirit of the storm (*pneuma kataigidos*). If of sin, you say, spirit of adultery. If you speak of the demon, you say, an impure spirit; that we may know what is in each case being spoken of, and not suppose that the Holy Spirit is in case. For the word spirit (*pneuma*) is a neutral one, and everything which has not a solid body is in general called spirit. And because the demons have not such bodies, they are called spirits."

"And," he continues, "there is a vast difference. For the unclean spirit, when it comes upon the soul of a man (and from such a visitation may the Lord preserve every soul of those that hear me, and of those who are absent), it comes like a blood-thirsty wolf ready to devour the lamb. Most fierce is its presence, overwhelming the sensation. The intellect is lost in darkness; and its assault is brutal, is the violent robbery of what belongs to another. For it takes forcible possession of, and uses as its own, another's body, and another's organ (? of speech). It throws down him who is standing up; for it is nearly allied to him that fell from heaven. It distorts the tongue. It twists awry the lips. Foam replaces language. Darkness covers the man. The eye is fixt wide open, and through it looks not forth the soul; and the wretched man throbs and trembles before death comes. Truly are the demons the enemies of men, treating them shamefully and pitilessly."

This is a powerful though distressing description of epileptic madness; and I only quote it in order to drive home my chief point, namely, that the demonological beliefs of the New Testament are absolutely the same as those of prior and subsequent ages. In Cyril's remarks preliminary to this description, we even have a mention

¹ Cyr. Al. c. I. xvi. 15.

of the spirit of the whirlwind which Jesus encountered on the Lake of Gennesaret, and, with the characteristic rebuke, "Be thou muzzled, be quiet," subdued, saving his disciples from a watery grave.

Not less interesting are Cyril's references to Exorcism.

Cyril on "Man," he writes just below¹, "as long as he carries about a body, has to struggle with many most fierce demons. And often the demon, who could not be restrained by many using iron manacles, is subdued by the words of prayer, by the power inherent in the Holy Spirit; and the simple in-blowing (*emphysema*) of the exorcist (*eporkizôn*) becomes a fire to the unseen foe."

Here once more we see that it was of fire that the demons were most afraid; and this was a belief extending far beyond Christian circles, as we shall see from the accounts preserved of the exorcismal triumphs of Apollonius of Tyana. In another passage², to which I have already referred, Cyril describes the use of *breathing* on the possessed, and compares the exorcist to a gold refiner. The human body is a crucible, the human soul is the gold hidden beneath the demonic dross. The breath of the exorcist strikes in terror by means of the Holy Spirit, and fans the smouldering spark of the soul into a flame. At once the hostile demon flees; but salvation remains behind along with hope of immortal life.

Such a passage as this agrees with Tertullian's references to *tactus et afflatus*, already cited, and no less with the rite of Baptism as practised in the Roman Church. It is clear that the *breath* of the exorcist was conceived to be itself the Holy Spirit, and not a mere symbol thereof. So also Jesus blew on his disciples and gave them the Holy Ghost.

In another passage³ Cyril describes the use of the exorcised oil (*elaion eporkiston*). It went immediately before the descent into the pool or piscina. The catechumens were first stripped naked before all, "like Adam in Paradise," females no less

¹ Cyr. Al. c. I. xvi. 19.

² Ibid. Procat. 9.

³ C. M. 2, 3.

than males; they were then anointed with the exorcised oil from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet. The real purport of the anointing was to block up all pores and inlets of the body against the return of the evil spirits. Wherefore on a great occasion, when among Gentiles, St. Thomas, according to his early but gnostic acts (§ 5), anointed the top of his head, his nostrils, his ears, teeth, and the region of his heart. "In the same way," writes Cyril, "as the in-blowings of the saints and the invocation of the name of God burn up like a most powerful flame and rout the demons; so this exorcised oil also, through the invocation of God and prayer, acquires such a power, as not only to burn up and cleanse out the traces of sin, but also to chase away all the unseen powers of the Evil One."

And these powers do not seem to have been always invisible; for in old Christian representations of exorcisms the devils are pictured in their flight as little black manikins making off¹. Demons pictured as manikins. Why they should have been so small, I do not know; probably, like the soul at death, they were supposed to come out by the mouth of the possessed. Into the question of the representation of demons in later Christian art, I need not enter.

Evidence of Jewish Literature.

The Gospels are a tale told with touching simplicity of a man who went about doing good, who felt it his mission to heal the sick, to comfort the repentant sinner, and himself to suffer as an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of mankind. We have the records of many famous saints, but not of many who were quite free from pride and respect of persons. Many have affected a contempt for riches. Necessity of reading N.T. in a critical spirit.

¹ See woodcut in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. Exorcism.

and fame, even for the shams of priests and the pedantry of divines. But few have really put away all this; and I can think of no other teacher, except perhaps the Buddha, who within a few years of his death was honoured with the title of the *sinless* servant of God, not only by personal followers, but by many who had never known him except in visions.

Such a record demands our reverence. But it is asked of us by the churches and orthodox sects, that in reading it we should also suppress our critical faculty. Not only are we told that we must believe in every incident narrated in the New Testament, but we are further to accept, without question, such dogmatic interpretations of the text as have been, long centuries ago, elaborated by the Catholic Church. The New Testament is thus put on a pedestal and invested with a dignity and sacro-sanctity which is not even claimed for the Old. For our leading divines of the present day, our Gores and our Farrars, our Swetes and our Temples, are willing to walk some way along the path of a more rational interpretation of the Old Testament; but from a similar treatment of the New they recoil. They cleave to the miraculous birth of Jesus, even when an ancient form of gospel turns up which clinches the many proofs of fabulous character which the Gospels already afforded. Jesus still walks upon the waters, raises the dead, converses on a mountain top with Moses and Elias, and feeds 5,000 hungry men upon nothing; he still issues alive and with restored flesh and blood from the tomb, and, with all his human and earthly appurtenances intact, ascends into heaven. No detail of this phantasmagoria is to be touched. They imagine that all doubts are silenced, because they have pushed back the date of the synoptic Gospels and of Acts, or rather of the previous materials used up in them, to within half a century of the death of Jesus. For they cannot realize that the general psychological conditions of orientals, the ecstasy of men who believed that the end

of the world was close at hand, the necessities of the messianic argument, the uncertainties of a tradition admittedly oral at first, the atmosphere of pagan myth breathed from birth by the Gentile converts, would explain an accretion in fifty years of fable round so great a personality many times as thick as that which actually obscures it.

But if one circumstance more than another reinforces the uncritical attitude of the orthodox sects, it is the Birth of
early Jewish
apostolic
records. apparent isolation of the New Testament narratives. Here is a body of literature which suddenly, and without any congeners, makes its appearance. Allied writings neither precede and herald it, nor yet follow it so closely as to assist us in clearing up its problems by supplying analogies.

It is certain that in the second century, when the canon of the New Testament was drawn up and imposed upon itself by the Church, there were still in existence writings of the earlier Jewish and of the apostolic age which the later Church either destroyed or allowed to perish as hostile to its later dogmatic developments, which would yet be invaluable to us now. Indeed, The Shepherd of Hermas, and The Didache, and The Epistle of Barnabas, and the Gospel of Peter have been restored to us. Yet, after all, the New Testament is not quite so isolated for us in respect of what went before it as is supposed. And in the apocryphs ascribed to Enoch we have Jewish books, unquestionably anterior to Christ, which bring before us at least some of the conditions of belief and expectation which preceded and rendered possible the ministry of Jesus. These apocryphs have only come down to us chiefly in Ethiopic or in Old Slavonic. Dillmann first translated the Ethiopic text in Germany; and lately Mr. Charles has given us in two volumes a scholarly English edition of the Enoch literature, which, according to Tertullian, writing as late as 200 A.D., "rang of Christ" (*Christum sonat*).

A *locus classicus* for the origin of the demons is found in a section of the book of Enoch¹, which Enoch on giants and demons. Mr. Charles ascribes to a period before 179 B.C. The passage is also preserved in its original Greek in Syncellus and in the Bouriant Papyrus lately dug up in Egypt, as well as in the Ethiopic version. This Greek text of Enoch, it must be remembered, was in turn a translation of a lost Hebrew book. From it we learn that the strong or evil spirits, which have their habitation on earth, are the giants that were begotten of mortal women by the watchers of heaven, the angels. They were thus born at once of spirits and of flesh." "Wicked spirits," the apocryph proceeds, "came out of the body of them (i.e. of the women), for they were generated out of human beings; and from the holy watchers flows the beginning of their creation and their primal foundation. The spirits of heaven—in the heaven is their dwelling; and the spirits begotten upon earth—in the earth shall be their dwelling. And the spirits of the giants will devour, oppress, destroy, assault, do battle, and cast upon the earth and cause convulsions. They will eat nothing, but fast and thirst, and cause visions and cause offences. And these spirits will rise up against the children of men and against the women, because they have proceeded from them." Here in a few lines is portrayed, just as in the Gospels, the activity of the demons. They are lost angels. They haunt the earth's surface. They assail men's bodies and convulse them, they cause visions and otherwise oppress mankind.

This vindictive war of demons is, so we learn², to continue until the day of consummation, until the great judgment, when the watchers and the godless will receive condign punishment. This belief also, as we saw, is present in the Gospels, in which the demons cry out to Jesus "Art thou come hither to torment us *before our time*?"

¹ Enoch, ch. xv.

² Ibid. ch. xvi. i.

In a later chapter¹ of Enoch we are told that the evil spirits, assuming many different forms, shall defile men and lead them astray to sacrifice to demons, as if to gods, until the day of the great judgment, in which they will be judged and ended, while wives of these angels which transgressed will be turned into sirens. Here the beliefs of Paul and John and Jesus are anticipated and presented as the popular beliefs of the Jews nearly two centuries earlier.

In a later chapter² of the same apocryph we read, just as we have read in the epistles of Peter and Jude, of the iron chains prepared for the hosts of angels, when they are cast down into the abyss of condemnation, as the Lord of spirits commanded. We read also of the fiery furnace into which Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Fanuel will cast them, that the Lord of spirits may take vengeance on them for their unrighteousness in subjecting themselves to Satan and leading astray the dwellers upon earth. Mr. Charles points out in his general introduction³ how many features of the New Testament demonology first appear in Enoch. "The functions of the satans in Enoch," he says, "are threefold: they tempted to evil, lxix. 4, 6; they accused the fallen, iv. 6, 7; they punished the condemned as angels of punishment, liii. 3; lvi. 1."

The Testaments of the patriarchs is an apocryph which has been wrongly ascribed to a church writer of the early second century. It is in fact, like Enoch, a Greek translation of a lost Jewish work; and, though later than Enoch, it is yet—with the exception of a few interpolations—in the main a pre-Christian document. In the Testament of Reuben we hear of the seven spirits given from Beliar against mankind, to wit, the spirits of life, seeing, hearing, smell, of talking, taste, and of the philoprogenitive impulses. To this group is added, as it were by an after-thought, an eighth, the spirit of sleep. Then the writer enumerates the members of another group of seven, namely, of fornication,

¹ Enoch, ch. xix. 1.

² Ibid. ch. liii. 5.

³ Ibid. p. 53.

of gluttony, of combativeness, of flattery and sorcery, of pride, falsehood, and injustice. We see how fond the demons were of the number seven. In the magic rituals of ancient Assyria, the demons commonly go about in groups of seven, as Lenormant has noticed in his work on Assyria (*Ancienne Histoire*, liv. 6). The Prince of Deceit, we read in the testament of Symeon¹, sent a spirit of envy and blinded the patriarch, till God sent an angel and rescued him. And fasting is recommended, as it was by Jesus, along with fear of God as a means of overcoming the demons of envy. For if a man flees to the Lord, the evil spirit runs away from him and his mind is *lightened*. *Lightened*, for, as we already know from Origen, the evil spirits were heavy, and weighed down with the dross of earth. Nor do the Testaments disagree with the New Testament as to the fate which will overtake the evil spirits: "When the Lord, the great God of Israel, shall appear on earth as man and save in his person Adam, then shall all the spirits of error be trodden underfoot, and men shall rule over the evil spirits." "Hate ye," says Aser², "the spirits of error which contend against man."

And we also have in the Testaments some curious beliefs about the behaviour to us after death of the demons whom we encouraged in life: "We must rest in the Lord, returning ourselves unto him (in death). Because the ends of men (when they die) show if they were just, and if they distinguished the angels of the Lord and of Satan. For if the soul departs troubled, it is being tormented by the evil spirit of which it was the slave on earth in lusts and evil works."

This particular belief was very popular among the early Christians, nor was it peculiar to them. For Origen declares³ that he in common with Jews, Greeks, and barbarians believed that the pure soul, which is not weighted with the leaden weights of sin, soars at death aloft to the regions tenanted by the purer and ethereal

¹ *Test. Sym.* 2.

² *Test. Aser.* 6.

³ *C. Cels.* vii. 5.

bodies, leaving the dense bodies of earth and the pollutions they contain. But the bad soul is dragged down to earth, and, without being able even to take breath, is carried and rolled about on it; one evil soul towards the tombs, where are actually seen the phantasms of shadowy souls; another, simply and solely around and about the earth. How many such spirits, he asks, must we not suppose to exist, that have been bound, so to speak, whole aeons long either by certain sorceries or by their own wickedness to houses and particular spots.

We must now turn to the Alexandrine Jew Philo, a contemporary of Jesus, and our sole surviving representative of that great school of philosophic Judaism which blended old Greek speculations with Semitic monotheism. In his book "Upon Giants," Philo comments on the text of Genesis: "But the angels of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and took to themselves wives of all whom they chose¹," as follows: "Those beings whom other philosophers call demons, Moses is wont to term angels; and they are souls flying about in the air. And let no one suppose that the statement is a myth; for it must needs be that the entire Cosmos is throughout instinct with soul (*ἐψυχῶσθαι*), and each of its primal and elementary parts contains its peculiar and appropriate living beings, to wit: the earth, animals of the dry land; the sea and rivers, those which live in water; fire, those begotten of fire, a kind which is said to exist specially in Macedonia; and heaven, the stars. For the stars are souls, through and through stainless and divine; for which reason they move in a circle with the movement most akin to reason. For each of them is reason pure and unalloyed.

"It must needs be then," he continues, "that the air too is replete with living beings, though these are invisible to us, just as the self is not visible to the senses. Of these souls," he continues in

The demons
fill the
world.

¹ Gen. vi. 2.

the next section, "some descend into bodies, but others have never deigned to associate themselves with any portion of earth; and the latter, hallowed and devoted to his worship, their Father and Creator is wont to use as his servants and deacons in regulating the life of mortals.

"The former kind, however, have gone down into the body as into a river, and are in some cases caught and engulfed by the swirl and violence of the whirlpool; but in other cases they manage to resist the current, and after swimming to shore they end by flying off back to the region whence they started. These, then, are the souls of those who were inspired from on high in their philosophy, and from start to finish studied to die to the life of the body, in order to win the life which is disembodied and incorruptible in the presence of Him that is neither begotten nor yet corruptible."

Then follows a deeply interesting chapter, in which Philo weighs the reasons for and against the belief in evil angels or demons; and after his manner he tries to give a higher spiritual meaning to the Enoch myth, with which, it is clear, he was acquainted.

In souls and demons and angels, he says, we have, it is true, different *names*; but in conceiving the thing represented by them all to be one and the same, you will set aside a heavy burden, namely, superstition (lit. fear of demons). However, he continues, just as the many say that there are good demons and bad, and souls to match; so you yourself will not be wrong in supposing that among angels too some are worthy of their good appellation, being in a manner envoys of man to God and of God to man, inviolate and holy by reason of the blameless and noble service so rendered; while others, on the contrary, are unholy and unworthy of the appellation. There is, he adds, evidence for me of this in the declaration of

Philo
allegorized
the Enoch
myth.

Bad demons,
if real,
servants of
divine
justice.

the hymn-writer (i. e. psalmist) in the following song: "He sent forth among them the wrath of his indignation, anger, and wrath, and tribulation, and missions of wicked angels¹." These are the wicked ones, he continues, who, falsely assuming the name of angels, know not the daughters of right reason, to wit, the sciences and virtues; but run after mortal offspring of mortal men, to wit, pleasures, which are not arrayed with the true beauty—that is to say, are not beheld in a purely intellectual manner by the mind alone, but with a bastard fairness of form by which the sense is tricked."

In other treatises² Philo identified outright the heroes and demons of Greek speculations with the angels of Moses and of holy writ. In one other passage he glances at the popular superstition, namely *De Mon.* 2. 226. 15. The oracular breastplate (λογεῖον) of the high priest is diversified with a double web, of which one half is called Manifestation (δῆλωσις), and the other Truth. By truth it is signified that falsehood may not lawfully mount to heaven; but that all falsehood has been routed and banished into the region near the earth, there dwelling in the souls of wicked men. With which cp. St. John viii. 44: "He is a liar, and the father of it."

There is thus no evidence in the works of Philo that he believed in possession of men's bodies by demons in the crude form in which the New Testament, St. John's Gospel excepted, presents this superstition. It is clear indeed from the passage I have quoted, that Philo was reluctant to believe in the existence even of bad angels; anyhow, he distinctly assigns the belief in bad demons to the vulgar, and betrays his consciousness of the painful evils of contemporary superstition. In many parts of his works he shows a profound acquaintance with medicine and surgery, and he was probably lifted by his culture far above the super-

Philo dis-
believed
in bodily
possession.

¹ Ps. lxxviii. 49.

² *De Plant. Noe*, § 4, vol. I, p. 332; *De Somn.* i. 22, vol. I, p. 641.

stitious tendencies which led the Evangelists, if not Jesus himself, to see not only in fever and rheumatism, but even in the winds, demoniacal agencies. In this respect, and yet more in the spirit of comprehensive charity with which he often treats of the sincere beliefs of the pagans in their gods and heroes and demons, he was far in advance not only of the authors of the New Testament, but of all the Fathers of the Church.

With Josephus, whose period of literary activity coincides with that of the Evangelists, we pass from Josephus believed in possession. cultured Alexandria into Palestine; and we find ourselves at once in an atmosphere of evil spirits, such as we are already familiar with in the pages of the New Testament. In his *Antiquities*¹, Josephus Solomon's incantations. relates how God vouchsafed to King Solomon "to learn the art of opposing the demons for the succour and healing of men. So that he (Solomon) composed incantations, by which sickness of all sorts is assuaged; and left to posterity methods of exorcising, by which they that are bound can chase away the demons, so that they shall never come back again. And this system of healing," he adds, "still prevails among us." And he Eleazar the Exorcist. forthwith relates how he saw Eleazar, a fellow Jew, expel, in the presence of Vespasian, a malignant demon, by holding to the nostrils of the man possessed a ring, under the seal of which was one of the roots recommended by Solomon. "By this means he drew out through the man's nostrils, when he had snuffed at it, the evil demon. The man fell down at once, and Eleazar adjured the demon never to return into him, mentioning the name of Solomon, and repeating over him the incantations which he (Solomon) had composed." More than this, to convince the bystanders, Eleazar set a basin of water close by, and commanded the demon in going out of the man to turn it over, and so prove to those who were looking on that it had really left the man.

¹ Joseph., *Antiq.* viii. 2, 5.

If it was believed, in that as in later ages, that a demon cannot pass water, it was natural for this one to trip over and upset the basin. So Jesus believed that a demon, when he quits a man, goes through waterless places in his quest for a resting-place. But we are probably here merely in presence of the belief, common then as now in the East, that the desert is the peculiar home of evil spirits. In another passage¹ Josephus tells us about a certain root, which had the property of instantly driving out the so-called demons; which, he says, were no other than the spirits of wicked men insinuating themselves into the living, and slaying those who have none to help them.

The Old Testament is remarkably free from the stories of possession by demons which are so common in the Synoptic Gospels. Not that kindred elements are altogether absent. For example, the representation of the Lord God in Genesis² as snuffing up the sweet savour of sacrifice, recalls Origen's picture of the demons, not to mention many other passages (e. g. Ps. l. (xlix.) 9, 13; 1 Sam. xv. 22; Isa. i. 11-13, lxvi. 3; Amos v. 21, 22), in which a material view of sacrifice is reprobated. By the time of Origen, indeed, more than one attribute of the God of the Old Testament had been passed on to the devils; for the gods of one age are the demons and fairies of the next, and the Old Testament exegesis of Philo, which the Church soon appropriated to itself, made impossible, except with the most vulgar, the ascription to the Almighty of so barbarous a trait.

In the Psalms we already read, as in Enoch and Paul, that the gods of the heathen are devils. In the book of the prophecies of Zechariah (xiii. 2) the Lord of Hosts

threatens to expel the prophets of the idols and the unclean spirits out of the land. In the book of Tobit³ we read of a simple remedy against a fiend: "Thou shalt take the ashes of some perfume, and shalt lay upon them some of the heart and

¹ *De Bello Iud.* vii. 6, 3.

² Gen. viii. 21.

³ Tobit vi. 10.

liver of the fish, and shalt make a smoke with it. And the devil shall smell it, and flee away, and never come again any more. The which smell, when the evil spirit had smelled, he fled into the utmost part of Egypt¹. And Raphael the angel went and bound him there." In

Saul's demon. 1 Sam. xix. 9 we read that an evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul as he sat in his house.

Earlier in the same book, when the spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, an evil spirit from the Lord troubled or terrified him (xiv. 15). In Judges ix. 23 we also read of God sending an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem. In Isaiah we read of the night-monster Lilith, which was of course an evil spirit; and those who wish to realize how profoundly the early religion of Israel was influenced by beliefs in evil spirits, can read about it in Robertson Smith's *Religion of the Semites*.

I could wish that it was sufficient for my purpose to have traced these beliefs in such Jewish writings as immediately preceded or were contemporary with the earliest

Talmud, Christian literature; for I hesitate to approach hard to use. the Talmud in connexion with my subject for two reasons. Firstly, I am not acquainted with it in the original, and so can only use it at second hand; and, secondly, there is a way with apologists, when they are confronted with some striking identity of the thought or practice between the New Testament and the Talmud, of arguing that the Talmud as a later work borrowed it from the New Testament. Thus, the late Dr. Edersheim, in his *Life of Christ*, argues that the comparison of the spirit of God with a dove, which is found in the Talmud, is an echo of the New Testament, regardless of the fact that the same comparison is frequent in the works of Philo, and that the whole of Jewish history after the fall of the Temple makes it extremely improbable that the Talmudists would have borrowed from the New Testament this comparison or any other.

¹ Tobit viii. 3.

Wünsche has published in German a very useful volume of illustrations of the Gospels from Talmudic sources ; and to his work, and to Lightfoot's *Horae Hebraicae*, and Eisenmenger's *Entdeckter Judaismus*, I am indebted for my slender knowledge of this aspect of the later Jewish mind.

Satan then in the Talmud is the slanderer, the accuser, the tempter, and the mischief-maker, according to Berachoth, fol. 58 a. He is not only the evil instinct in man's heart, but an evil agent objectively real and external to man (Wünsche, p. 24, note).

Bodily defects and all physical sufferings, not otherwise explicable, are in the Talmud ascribed to evil spirits. The Mishna, or earliest portion of it, written down before 135 A.D., bears little trace of the belief in possession of evil demons ; but the Babylonian and Jerusalem Gemara, written down respectively as early as 500 and 400 A.D.,

teem with evidence of such beliefs. Their pages make one feel as if Jewish life in the early centuries was a prolonged *Walpurgisnacht*. We learn the names of countless demons, their places of resort, and the various means of rendering them visible, and of confronting them. Every hour of the day and night had its own particular demon, and the whole atmosphere was peopled with them (Berachoth, fol. 6 a). We hear of one, Agrath bat Machlath, who had a following of 180,000 deadly demons, reminding us of the legion of devils in the Gospels. And the Talmudic demons are visible or invisible at will, and assume all sorts of shapes (Joma, fol. 75 a). Like the demons of the New Testament, they haunt the dry, waste, and unfrequented places of the earth, and are especially active at night-time. Like destroying angels, they bring harm, ill-luck, illness, and deformities on mankind ; and they lie in wait for us until some weak act lays us open to their assaults. They enter into some men, take possession of them, and drive them out of human society. Such is the fate of the madman who goes out

alone by night to wander among the tombs of the dead. Upon him an impure spirit falls, by means of whom the possessed reads the future and performs works of necromancy (Chagiga, fol. 3 b). The prince of the demons, by whose aid (Matt. viii. 31) Jesus was accused of casting out devils, was either the Aschmedai or Asmodeus of the Talmud, whose regular title therein is ruler of demons, or Samael, also called Satan. Any one who had this king of evil spirits for his friend was believed to have all hostile spirits subject unto him (Midrash, Vajikra r. par. 5, and Gittin, fol. 68 a. Cp. More Nebuchim, part ii, c. 30).

Lastly, in the Talmud (Meila, fol. 17 b) it is related that Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai could cast out demons exactly as did Jesus. This rabbi was on his way with another to the Court of Rome, to secure the repeal of an edict hostile to the Jewish religion, when a demon called Ben Temelion met him. "May I go with you?" asked the demon. "Let the portent come, whencesoever it be," answered the rabbi. Thereupon the supposed spirit hurried on in front and entered into the daughter of the emperor, who at once went mad, raved and shrieked out continually that they must bring to her the Rabbi Simeon. When he arrived he summoned the froward spirit to go forth, saying: "Depart out of her, Ben Temelion;" and the evil spirit obeyed. "Ask what reward you will," they said to the liberator, leading him into the treasury. There the two rabbis found the edict which was the object of their mission, and at once tore it up.

It has not been noticed by any one that this story is none other than that related in the Acts of Abercius, bishop of Hierapolis, who was visited by a demon, which then went to Rome and possessed Lucilla, daughter of Marcus Aurelius. The girl in her frenzy called for the Christian bishop, or rather the evil spirit in her proclaimed that he would only

A Roman
emperor's
daughter
possessed.

This story
recurs in
Acts of
Abercius.

submit to Abercius, who accordingly, having been sent for in hot haste, came and cured the girl. The Jewish tale was certainly borrowed by the Christian hagiologist of the fourth century, and seems to have in it germs of truth. For the Rabbi Eliezer, and not Ben Jochai, was the envoy who expelled the demon, and the embassy was either to Vespasian or to his son Domitian. This Eliezer was no doubt the same rabbi whose exorcismal powers, displayed before Vespasian and his family, Josephus mentions. Domitilla may have been the emperor's daughter cured by Eliezer¹.

And in the Talmud we also find the same distinction between merely evil spirits and unclean ones. Unclean or necromantic demons. which is so common in the New Testament. Thus the gloss in Sanhedr., fol. 65, 2, explains the term "spirit of uncleanness" as equivalent to "spirit of the tombs." And a Pythonic or divining spirit was unclean, because the man who was possessed by it acquired it by calling up the dead and sitting on a corpse. Lightfoot supposes—and with good reason—that the man in the synagogue (Luke iv. 33) who had in him a spirit of an unclean devil, and who cried out, "Alas, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us?" was a necromancer, such as is described in the above passage of the Talmud. He had wilfully and by magic incantations absorbed the foul spirit of the dead. But some, like the demoniac of Gadara, had been overpowered and forcibly taken possession of by such a spirit, and were by it driven among the tombs. In Wicked spirits. contradistinction to such foul spirits, those which inflicted infirmities merely (*ἀσθενείας*) were only wicked spirits. In the Talmud (Gittin, fol. 77, 2) drunkenness is due to possession by a demon called Cordicus or Cordiacus; and it was probably the fear of being oppressed like Noe, by a demon, rather than a genuinely ascetic

¹ For a fuller discussion of the story see the *Academy* for June 6, 1896.

tendency, which dictates to Mohammedans their strict abstinence from wine. Another evil spirit, called Shibta, assailed male children between the ages of two and seven, seizing the muscles of the neck and so killing them. Such probably was the evil spirit which possessed the epileptic boy in Matt. xvii. 14 (= Mark ix. 33 and Luke ix. 39), and which the disciples could not cast out.

The Talmudists regard as the worst of evil spirits Baal Zebul, who was in a way their prince, and who, reigning among idols and inspiring the oracles of the heathen, wrought their miracles for them.

Talmudic
charges
against
Jesus.

Just as in the New Testament the Jews accuse Jesus of working his miracles by help of Baal Zebul, so in the Talmud he is accused of having been a magician, who by infernal arts got possession of the secret name of the Most High, and with it worked miracles, leading the people astray into idolatry. In the *Acta Pilati* the Jews prefer the same charge against him, that he was a *goês* or cheating wizard.

Thus in the Talmud we find the same beliefs which pervade the New Testament and dominate the writings of the Fathers. And this is entirely what we should expect, for the Talmud was being composed contemporaneously with those writings, namely, from 150 to 500 A. D. It is singular that the Old Testament is so free from demonology, hardly containing—as Lightfoot (*Horae Hebr.*, vol. II, p. 312, ed. 1699) notes—more than one or two examples thereof. Lightfoot's explanation of the relative frequency of cases of possession in the New Testament is not uninteresting. Firstly, the Jewish people, he says, had reached the pitch of iniquity, and so were reaping the full harvest of curses promised in Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii. And secondly, this race, more than any other given up to magic arts, had wooed the devil so earnestly that he had finally taken up his abode in them (*Horae Hebr.*, vol. II, p. 312, ed. 1699).

Evidence of Greek Pagan Writers.

The belief in demons is equally to be traced in Greek literature from the earliest period. But it is noticeable that in the earlier and more classical writers it rarely comes to the surface. Of a truth the great historians, philosophers, and poets of Athens, and equally the Latin writers of the Republican age and early empire, were drawn as it were from an aristocracy of intellect, and approached more nearly in their freedom from this form of superstition to ourselves than do the authors of any intervening epoch. If, however, we had the books of the poor and uneducated during these two golden epochs of ancient literature, we should certainly find them rife with the crude beliefs which come to the surface and dominate the literature, profane and Christian alike, of the first century A.D. and of all succeeding ages.

Even in Homer, however, as Prof. Tylor points out¹ in his thoughtful chapters on Demonology, "Sick men racked with pain are tormented by a hateful demon (*στυγερὸς δέ οἱ ἔχραε δαίμων*)."² And common language revealed the popular belief in possession in its use of such a term as *ἐπίληψις*, "Epilepsy," which is called by Hippocrates and Aristotle the sacred disease (*ἱερὰ νόσος*), because in it the demon took possession of the sick man. If it was a wood-nymph whose spirit took possession of a man, he was *νυμφόληπτος*, a word already used in Plato and Aristotle. But a mad person was simply said to have a demon (*δαιμονᾶν*); and the circumstance that Socrates called the supernatural principle which he believed to reside within him a demon (*δαιμόνιον*), proves that his contemporaries were familiar with the idea. Indeed, Plato² defines a demon as an agent halfway between God and

¹ *Primitive Culture*, vol. II, ch. 15; Hom., *Od.* 5. 396, and 10. 64.

² *Symp.* 327 F.

mortal, interpreting and ferrying across to the gods messages from men, and to men those of the gods; the prayers and offerings of the one set, and the behests and acceptances of sacrifice of the other. One such demon was Eros; but they were many and various.

His successors, Xenocrates (396–314 B. C.) and Chrysippus, says Plutarch¹, following the theology of the ancients, declared the demons to have been superhumanly strong men, in whom the divine element was alloyed with a soul-nature and a faculty of bodily sensation, in virtue of which they felt pleasure and pain. And as among men, so among the demons there were, according to these older authorities, distinctions of virtue and vice. Plutarch actually cites a passage of Xenocrates to the effect that beside the good demons, who, like the gods, must not be invoked on unlucky days, there are in the atmosphere around us great and strong natures or agencies, which are, however, intractable and morose.

Like Enoch, Empedocles²—so we read in the same *Empedocles* text—held that these evil demons are punished on Demons. for their sins and offences by the higher cosmic powers; but their punishment is in the nature of a purification (*καθαρθέντες*), after which they regain their natural place and position. Here then we have proof that the idea of good and bad demons—powers of air—was quite familiar to Greek philosophers of the fourth century before Christ. A similar belief is found in Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. Rom.* i. ii), in Aristides (*T.* ii. p. 106), and Maximus Tyrius (*Diss.* xiv. 8). The belief that the demons are ultimately purified and regain their lost position resembles and may underlie even Origen's view, for which the Church condemned him, that as all things are possible with God, even the Devil himself may at the last be saved.

¹ *De Iside*, 360 E.

² On Empedocles see Hippol., *Philosophum*, 3, 1 (*Doxolog.* p. 558).

Chrysippus (350 B. C.) believed¹ that the demons roamed about the world as agents of divine justice to punish the impious and unjust, a view also found in Origen², who quoted in proof of it the same Psalm (lxxviii. 49) which we found Philo quoting in proof of the existence of bad angels. Plutarch³ also refers to the Ephesian writings (*Ἐφέσια γράμματα*), which the Magi ordered those who were possessed to recite, naming names to themselves. Here Plutarch uses the same word to denote possession (*δαιμονιζόμενοι*) which we find in the Ephesian Gospels. These Ephesian spells, which we spells. already read of in Aristotle, must have contained potent names of which the demons stood in awe. Of such spells or incantations (*ἐπεδαί*), as the Greeks called them from Homer downwards, we have very few specimens left that go back to any great antiquity; and this lacuna in our knowledge of the older religions⁴ is largely due to Christian copyists, who whenever they lit on such a formula in a MS., either left it out or substituted a Christian form of exorcism. Such formulae were primarily drawn up with a view to drive off demons. But the strictly medicinal ones, called *ἀλεξιφάρμακα*, were often to be used in conjunction with some root or herb; and every doctor was supposed to know how to expel, not so much diseases in our modern sense, as the demons which produced them.

Egyptian In Egypt during recent years vast numbers papyri. of papyri containing exorcisms have been found, and many of them edited. They are usually full of ancient names, Jewish, Chaldaic, Egyptian, Persian; and much of the apparent gibberish they contain may consist really of prayers in those languages. Origen, as we saw above, insists on the necessity of keeping to the original tongues⁵;

¹ Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 277 A.

² *C. Cels.* viii. 32.

³ *Symp.* vii. 706 D.

⁴ See *Jahrbücher für Classische Philologie*, 1893, art. entitled "Incantamenta magica graeca latina, collegit Ricardus Heim," to which learned and exhaustive monograph I am indebted for much information.

⁵ Cp. Pap., *Anastasy*, 486; *Mimant.* 118 (in Wessely): "I am he who called

and the early Christians claimed it to be the great merit of their Lord Jesus that his name was cosmopolitan and known to all demons, whereas the demons were, as a rule, only to be got at by addressing them each in his own tongue.

The prevalence of Jewish names in these formulae agrees with the reputation as exorcists which in antiquity the Jews enjoyed. Origen¹ himself noticed this, and preserves us such a formula in the passage following: "The God of Israel and the God of the Hebrews and the God who overwhelmed in the Red Sea the king of Egypt and the Egyptians, is often brought into the spell and named against demons or against certain evil demons." In this formula the supernatural power is first named, and then it is recited what he has done so as to make it quite clear to the demons what power it is that is brought into play against them. In the formula of Christian exorcism, which I quoted above from Justin Martyr, an early and short form of creed was for the same reason appended to the name of Jesus.

Among the papyri bearing on this subject, one of the Papyrus most remarkable is the Paris 3,009, reprinted exorcism. and re-edited by Dr. A. Dieterich in his remarkable work entitled *Abraaxas* (Leipzig, 1891). It is a ritual for exorcising demons. The exorcist takes oil with certain herbs, and saying a string of gibberish, beginning thus, *Iôêlôssarthiômi emôri theô chipsoîth sithemeôch*, he bids the demon to begone from so-and-so. The formula, *ἐξέλθε ἀπὸ τοῦ Δεῖνα*, is that which was commonly used by Jesus. A phylactery was to be written on a tin plate as follows: *Iaeô Abraôthiôch phtha mesen, &c.*, and hung round the neck of the possessed, as calculated to scare off every demon. Then the exorcist took his stand opposite the

thee in Syriac the Great God . . . do Thou I pray, not mishear the sound in Hebrew. Do this thing, because I exorcise thee with the Hebrew sound." (See Anrich, *Antike Mysterienwesen*, p. 96.)

¹ *C. Cels.* iv. 34.

possessed and had to read a long exorcism (*orkismos*), beginning thus: "I adjure (*orkizô*) thee by the God of the Jews, Iaeô¹ Iabaiâ aia thôth ele elô," &c. The most powerful exploits of the God of the Jews, as related in the Old Testament, especially the passage of the Red Sea, are summarized for the good of the demon in some fifty lines, and then the ritual ends thus:

"I adjure thee by him that is in the pure Jerusalem, for whom the unquenchable fire is through all eternity stored up at his command, by his holy name, Iaeô barrenuzoun.

"Recital: Whom Genna of fire trembles before and flames flame up around, and iron and every mountain dreads from its foundations. I adjure thee, every demon-spirit (*pneuma daimonion*), by him who surveys the earth and makes its foundations to quail, and brought all things out of nothing into being. And I adjure thee that receivest from me this form of adjuration (*orkismos*) not to eat swine, and then there shall be subject unto thee every spirit and demon of whatsoever kind. And in adjuring, blow from the extremities and from the feet, removing the blowing (*phusêma*) up unto the face, and it shall be eliminated. Preserve it purely; for the form of words (*logos*) is Hebrew, and preserved among pure men."

Although the above *logos* or ritual form terms itself Hebraic, I have not classed it with the Jewish evidence but with the Greek, because the objective manner in which it alludes to the God of the Hebrews indicates that it was not purely Jewish. It may have been in use among Greek proselytes. Dieterich refers it to the second century B. C. The similarity of its language to that of the New Testament is significant. The passage, "There shall

¹ Dieterich allows *κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν Ἑβραίων Ἰησοῦ* to stand, though of course for the last word *Ἰάω τοῦ* or something similar should be read. For in the same ritual just below we have *ὀρκίζω σὲ μέγαν θεόν Σαβαώθ. Ἰησοῦ* must be a misreading of the papyrus, the contents of which Dieterich refers to a pre-Christian age.

be subject unto thee every spirit and demon," is expressed in the very terms of Luke x. 17, 20.

Origen, we saw, repeatedly insists on the necessity of attaching to the name of God or demon a string of words in which his full history and attributes are given; and in exorcising with the name of Jesus Christ, *μαθήματα*, or lore, from the Holy Scriptures was added. It was doubtless the necessity of forging a compendious but effective instrument against the devil which helped to give rise to those abstracts of teaching about Christ which we call creeds. And the recitals of the history of Christ¹, spoken of by Origen², were in all probability nothing else. Traces of the same belief are to be observed in the New Testament. For example, in Acts³ the Jewish exorcists adjure the evil spirits "by Jesus whom Paul preacheth," so as to make it clear to them which Jesus and what power was enlisted against them. In the same book of the Acts⁴ we find Peter appending to the name of Jesus, the Messiah of Nazareth, a brief mention of his life, death, and resurrection, when he explains to the elders of Israel how the sick man had been saved. And in the Gospels we are repeatedly assured⁵ that the demons themselves knew from the first who Jesus really was, and recognized him as the Son of God; otherwise they would have needed to be informed. Indeed, the testimony of the demons was barely less weighty and valuable than that of the dove-shaped Holy Spirit or St. Peter.

This practice of adding in an incantation a short history of the demon, or passages from the Sacred Books, is already referred to in Herodotus⁶, who relates that when a worshipper had named the particular god and prepared his expiatory sacrifice, the magus came

¹ Οὐ γὰρ κατακλήσειεν ἰσχύειν δοκοῦσιν (sc. οἱ χριστιανοί), ἀλλὰ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ μετὰ τῆς ἀπαγγελίας τῶν περὶ αὐτὸν ἱστοριῶν.

² Cels. i. 6.

³ Acts xix. 13.

⁴ Ibid. iv. 10.

⁵ Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24, 34; v. 7.

⁶ Herod. i. 132.

forward and sang an incantation, consisting of a theogony or history of the birth and origin of the god—a creed, in fact. The same idea, though not so clearly, inspired most ancient charms used to avert the demons of sickness. In Marcellus¹, an old medical writer, we accordingly read of a cure for ophthalmia, which consisted in writing on a bit of paper a line of Homer, explanatory of the sun-god's attributes: "Sun, that beholdeth all and heareth all," and then hanging it like a phylactery round the patient's neck. Similarly a short history about a god or goddess had to be recited, and the name, and mother's name, of the sick man specified by the person who dug up the magic root or herb for application. R. Heim, in his valuable monograph², gives many instances of this, and the magic papyri are full of verses of Homer to be thus repeated over the sick, and ancient amulets frequently have the same inscribed on them. The purport of adding such citations of a sacred book was to acquaint the disease-demon with the nature of the power arrayed against him. At the entrance of a mosque in the East are to be seen native scribes, who for a fee write out passages of the Qûran for the use of the sick. Such phylacteries soon become mere fetiches, potent in themselves, as are charms. But in origin they were Holy Scriptures, i. e. histories of the god, written for the instruction of the disease-fiends.

As faith was a condition of Christian cures, so it was of pagan ones. So Marcellus says: "It is only with great faith (*cum magna fiducia*) that we must approach the healing of this kind of illness with this sort of remedy." Alexander³ of Tralles also insists upon the need of faith: "I exhort you," he says, "not to reveal such lore as this to any and every one, but only to godly persons who know how to keep it secret. For this is why the divine Hippocrates exhorts us, saying: 'Matters that are holy are shown to holy men, but to profane and unbelievers it is

¹ Marcellus Burdigal, viii. 58.

² Fleckeisen's *Jahrbücher*, 1893.

³ Alex. Trall. ii. 377 (ed. Puschmann).

wrong to reveal them.'” Lucian¹ ridiculed this talk about faith as the condition of healing in one of his dialogues, and makes one of his interlocutors, who is the champion of faith-healing, address to the impugner thereof the following rebuke: “You seem to me not even to believe in the existence of the gods, unless at any rate you believe that cures can be wrought by use of sacred names.”

Richard Heim, in the monograph I have referred to, gives many pagan formulae of healing, which illustrate to us how the ancients had many deities to help them against the disease-demons, just as Christians have Christ, the Virgin, and the saints. Thus in a work falsely attributed to Pliny² we have the following against quartan ague: “Write on a clean piece of paper, to be attached to the sufferer’s right arm, the words ‘Begone from yonder Gaius Seius, Solomon is after thee (*te sequitur*).’” Here is another formula from an ancient gem: “Flee, O Gout, Perseus pursues thee (*φύγε ποδάγρα, Περσεύς σε διώκει*).” Here is one from Alexander of Tralles³ against colic: “Take an iron ring, make it octagonal, and inscribe it with the words: Flee, flee, gall of poison, the crested lark is after thee.” In the *Hippiatrica*⁴ we have a remedy for distemper in horses. You gave the animal a potion, and *blew* upon him, saying, “Flee then, O evil distemper, Poseidon is after thee (*διώκει σε Ποσειδῶν*).” How vividly do such remedies illustrate the miracle of Jesus when he *rebuked* the fever, “and it left her.” Nor must we forget in this connexion how the ancients raised altars to fever, that scourge of man in southern lands.

In the miracle of Gadara, the demons are transferred to Demons the bodies of animals; for it was the popular transferred. belief that any pest will leave you if you provide for it fresh woods and pastures new. Thus in the *Geoponica* (xiii. 5, 4) we have the following formula against mice: “I exorcise the mice here caught. Do me no harm

¹ *Philops.* 10.

² Pseudo-Plin. iii. 15, p. 89 R.

³ Alex. Trall. p. 377.

⁴ *Hippiatrica*, p. 15, c. 22.

yourselves, nor suffer another to do so. For I give unto you *this* field (here he shall name the particular field). But if I catch you here any more, I will invoke the aid of the mother (i. e. Cybele) and cut you into six parts." Here, again, is a cure for toothache from Marcellus¹: "Put your shoes on and, standing on the earth in the open air, take a frog by the head, open its mouth and spit into it; and you shall ask it to carry off with itself your toothache. Then let it go alive, and from that day and hour you will be quite well." The Arabs to this day believe that a toothache is a fiend sitting in the tooth. Mr. Whitley Stokes has informed me that in Ireland it is still a common belief that diseases can be transferred from human beings into animals; and that in India the people think that the transferee may be a plant.

Again, if your liver distressed you, you could, according to Marcellus², catch a green lizard, and by observing certain precautions get it to carry away in itself your malady; and you had to address the lizard thus: "Behold, I will let you go alive. See that, no matter what I eat, my liver shall give me no trouble."

The same writer gives a receipt for transferring a man's stomach-ache into a live hare³; and Pliny the elder (died 79 A.D.) gives⁴ this cure for the bite of a scorpion: "You at once whisper into the ear of a jackass: A scorpion has stung me; and the pain will be immediately transferred into the animal."

And though it does not come under Greek or Latin examples, let me conclude this section with a more modern instance furnished by Prof. Tylor⁵: Charles VI of France was possessed, and a priest tried in vain to transfer his demon into the bodies of twelve men who were chained up to receive it. That the Christian fathers themselves regarded the Gadarene swine in the light suggested by the magic remedies which I have quoted, is clear from some

¹ Marc. xii. 24.

² Ibid. xxii. 11.

³ Ibid. xx. 66.

⁴ Pliny, xxviii. 155.

⁵ *Prim. Cult.*, vol. II, ch. 14.

lines of St. Gregory of Nyssa which occur on an amulet. In these the disease is first bidden to flee from the patient's head, and the epigram ends thus: "Christ the king commands thee to flee into the depths of the sea, or down the rocks, or into the herd of swine, like the destructive legion long ago. So get thee gone."

Just as the Greeks called a madman *δαιμονιζόμενος*, so the Romans called him *larvatus*, i. e. one filled with a larva or ghost. "*Iam deliramenta loquitur; larvæ stimulant virum*," says Plautus (*Capt.* iii. 4, 66), who is fond of both the word and the idea. So the Jews said to Jesus, by way of indicating that he was mad, "Thou hast a devil."

In Apuleius' (born 130 A.D.) *De deo Socratis* we have a philosophy of demons, whom he classifies according as they were immortal spirits that had never been embodied, or merely the ghosts of deceased men, good or bad. His doctrine is the same as Philo's, and the frequent identity of his thought and phrase with Philo's proves that both writers drew from an old and pre-Christian source. Apuleius, however, does not, any more than Philo, propound a theory of possession, and we cannot certainly say that he believed in it. It is worthy of remark, however, that he believed that demons were sometimes visible, though oftener they were not.

Departing from the chronological order of writers, and reserving the works of Pausanias and of Philostratus, let us next take account of the views of Porphyry, who was born in Palestine about 233 A.D., because in him we have a more complete philosophy of demons than in any pagan writer of the first three centuries, excepting Apuleius. Except that he admitted the existence of good demons as well as of bad, Porphyry's beliefs are identical with those of Origen. And even this difference is only nominal, since his good demons are identical with Origen's angels. But, in spite of such resemblances, we cannot suppose that he was

Beliefs of
Porphyry
same as
Origen's.

influenced by Christianity, of which he was a bitter opponent. The truth is that the Pagans, Christians, and Jews of the first five centuries all breathed the same air, and were inspired by the same beliefs about good and evil spirits. There was some difference of names, but nothing more. All minds moved together on the same plane. The malignant demons live, according to Porphyry¹, close to the earth; are sometimes visible, sometimes not. They love the blood and stench of victims slain, and grow strong and fat upon it. They disguise themselves as animals, and have Serapis, who is the same as Pluton, for their president. They are ambitious to be thought real gods, and therefore seduce men into worshipping them by working signs and wonders. Their president would fain supplant the Supreme God in men's minds.

They ever lie in wait for men, and fall upon them; for *ἐμπτωσις*, "falling upon," is Porphyry's word for possession; and his dread of possession made him a fervent advocate of vegetarianism. For eaters of blood and flesh lay themselves open to the risk of demons insinuating themselves (*εἰσδύνειν*) into their bodies. Abstinence alone could keep them off, as Jesus and the unknown author of the Clementine homilies had long before taught. The demons, furthermore, when they enter one along with the flesh-eaters cause him whom they thus possess to emit obscene sounds and winds, a proof that they are enjoying themselves within the glutton's belly. It is the business of priests, says Porphyry, to drive out (*ἐξελαύνειν*) the demons, in order that when they have departed God may enter (*ἵνα τούτων ἀπελθόντων παρουσία τοῦ θεοῦ γένηται*). And purificatory rites (*ἀγνεῖαι*) are not primarily celebrated for the sake of the gods at all, but simply to get rid of demons (*ἵνα οὗτοι ἀποστῶσι*). A house is full of demons, and we must purify it first (*προκαθαίρουσι*) and eject (*ἀποβάλλουσι*) them, whenever we would call upon

¹ *Ap. Euseb.*, pr. ev. iv. 22 seq.

God. Such purificatory rites were the pagan analogues to baptismal and other exorcisms among Christians. Porphyry is a late writer, and so it may be argued that he was influenced by the Christianity around him. But according to Eusebius in the same context, Porphyry was largely following Theophrastus (died 281 B.C.). The latter writer specially taught that the beings to whom sacrifices were appropriate and fitting offerings were not gods, but only demons, deceitful and wicked.

Origen lets us know that Celsus¹, the assailant of Christianity during the reign of Antoninus Pius, not only believed in demons, but reckoned Jesus to have been one. Celsus believed² that demons watched over every region of the earth, and over all the periods of human life; and he was not even averse to the Egyptian belief, that thirty-six demons preside over the thirty-six parts of which the body is made up, and that cures³ can only be effected by invoking them. However, Celsus was suspicious⁴ of the worship of demons as likely to involve men in magic arts, and make them forgetful of beings higher than demons. "For," says he, "we should not perhaps distrust wise men who say that most of the demons that haunt the earth (*περιγεῶν*) are immersed in material things and riveted to blood and reek of altars, and are led captive by monstrous chantings, and are enchained by other such charms, so that they can hardly do more than heal the body, and foretell what is going to happen to a man or to a community. What concerns the actions of perishable beings, this much and no more do they know and are able to do."

We see from such passages as the above that, as regards demons, Origen stood with his feet on the same ground as Celsus and Porphyry, the representative pagans of the second and third centuries; not only so, but their common doctrine of the natures, habits, and faculties of demons is

¹ *C. Cels.* viii. 39.

² *Ibid.* viii. 55.

³ *Ibid.* viii. 58.

⁴ *Ibid.* viii. 60.

carried back by Celsus' reference to the wise men, with whom he hesitated to disagree, to an earlier period than his own, certainly to the first century of our era. Theophrastus, to whom we have already alluded, may very well have been one of these wise men. His picture of demons feeding on blood and reek of sacrifice is identical with that drawn by Celsus. These wise men were also pagans, or Celsus would not speak of them with so much respect.

Another of Origen's extracts from Celsus bearing upon Demons in demons is to be noticed, because of the allusion dry places. it contains to demons that lived in waterless places. "As many demons," he says, "as live in dry places (τόποις ἐνδιατρύβουσιν ἀνχμηροῖς) and have their bodies rather dry (ὑπόξηρα), as are, they say, the demons with donkey's legs—all these transform themselves into human beings, though they occasionally liken themselves to dogs and lions and other animals that have a manly look about them." Now the empusa or hobgoblin, of whom we read in Aristophanes¹ and Demosthenes², also had donkey's legs. It is clear then that the demon who sought rest in waterless places was one of these dry demons that had a partiality for the human form divine, though he had donkey's legs, as Satan in Christian pictures of him has those of a goat, like an ancient fawn. Thus he was quite a classical being. It may have been an ancient belief that evil spirits cannot pass running water. It has certainly been so in later times. "A running stream they dare na' cross," as Burns wrote in his *Tam o' Shanter*. In this case there was a bridge, and yet the demons in pursuit of Tam could not cross it; any more than the evil spirits in the *Avesta* could cross the Chinvat bridge over the water into heaven. But neither could the good souls have entered Paradise without this bridge, which was a *farsang* in breadth. The shades of old equally required Charon with his boat to ferry them over the Styx; and in the folklore of every race we find bridges, often merely of

¹ Aristoph. *Ran.* 293, and *Ecol.* 1056.

² Demosth. 270, 25.

string, stretched over a river, provided for demons and souls of men to cross by. Mr. Whitley Stokes reminds me that in the Vision of Adamnan there is given an elaborate description of such a bridge. But I suspect that the New Testament demons simply resorted to waterless places because the dry desert was the natural haunt of evil spirits, as in Isaiah. Edom laid waste is to be the home of the satyr and night-monster.

In another passage Celsus¹ relates how he had seen in the hands of certain presbyters, of the Christian persuasion, barbarous (i. e. non-Greek) books containing the names of demons and gibberish. These books which Celsus saw the Christians use must have been similar to some of the magic papyri found in recent times in Egypt, in which the name of Jesus competes with the names of Abraham, Solomon, and other Hebrew worthies, and even with those of pagan deities. The barbarous tongue which the Christian presbyters used in the middle of the second century was no doubt Aramaic or Hebrew.

It is in the life of Apollonius by Philostratus that we have some of the most remarkable tales of Apollonius of Tyana. demons and exorcism which remain to us in Greek literature. Apollonius was a contemporary of Jesus Christ, and made it his mission, as a follower of Pythagoras, to banish from the religion of his Greek contemporaries sacrifices of animal victims. He died in Ephesus, where he may very well have come into contact with St. John. Several contemporary writers left lives or memoirs of him which are unfortunately lost, so that we depend for our knowledge of him on the life by Philostratus, a sophist born 182 A. D.

The scene of the following incident is laid in India, and it seems to have been taken by Philostratus from the memoirs of the sage, composed by his credulous demon. Syro-Greek follower Damis. There was brought to him a woman who besought him to heal her son,

¹ *C. Cels.* vi. 40.

a boy sixteen years of age, who had been possessed for two years by a demon of an ironical and lying disposition. Her account of it was that this demon was in love with her child because of his good looks; and that it allowed him to have no sense, nor to go to school or drill nor yet remain at home, but drove him out into desert places. "And the boy moreover had lost his own voice, and spoke in a deep hollow tone, like a grown up-man; and looked at you with another's eyes rather than with his own. And I, said the mother, weep and mope and reprove my son, as is natural, but he does not know me." The demon, she went on, had used the boy's voice to proclaim himself, and said that he was the shade of a man who had died long ago on the battlefield, and out of disgust for his wife—who had married another man on the third day after his death—he had transferred his affections to this child. The demon, we read, was very angry with the mother when she proposed to appeal to Apollonius for aid, and threatened to kill her son if she accused him to the sage. The boy was far away, so Apollonius merely took a letter out of his bosom, full of threats of a kind to scare off the shade, and gave it to the mother, saying, "Be of good cheer, for he will not kill your boy when he has read this." The threats which cowed this demon were probably similar to those used by Christian exorcists. They were of burnings and tortures, such as we read of in the Book of Enoch, in Minucius Felix, in Tertullian, and in the Gospels. In another story, which I shall quote, of Apollonius this point is made certain.

Here is the outline of another story¹ which Philostratus relates on the authority of the same Damis. The demon and the bridegroom. Menippus, a young philosopher, was to marry a rich and beautiful Phoenician girl at Corinth. The sage appeared at the marriage-banquet, and denounced the bride as a *φάσμα* or ghost, of the kind known as an *empusa* or *lamia* or *mormolukia*, a species of hobgoblin

¹ Philostr., *Vit. Apollon.* iv. 24.

given up to sensual enjoyment, and after a while devouring the body of the youths they seduce. Instantly all the lights and goblets vanished from the young man's eyes, and the ghost appeared to weep; and she besought the sage not to punish her, nor compel her to avow what she was. But he pressed her hard and gave her no respite till she admitted that she was an empusa, and was fattening Menippus with pleasures in order to devour his body. Ἐλέγχειν, to convict, is the word used¹ in this book to express the sage's triumph over the demons. So, we saw in reading Tertullian and Minucius Felix, the Christian exorcist's success lay in his being able to force the demons to own to being demons and nothing more.

On another occasion a drunken youth scoffed at Apollonius for his piety². But he looked up at him and said, " 'Tis not thou that art thus insolent, but the demon who drives thee on without thy knowing it." And apparently, goes on the narrator, the young man was possessed without being aware of it; for he kept laughing at things at which no one else laughed, and then would fall to weeping without any cause, and talked and sang to himself. After a while Apollonius fixed him with his eye, and the shade (εἶδωλον), after it had uttered sounds of fear and wrath, proper to beings who are being *burned and tortured*, at last swore that he would leave the youth and never fall on any man again. Then the sage, speaking in anger, as a master would to a criminal and shameless slave, bade the demon give a token of his departure as he went out. "I will throw down yonder statue," answered the demon, pointing to one of those which lined the king's stoa. And the statue at first moved slightly, and then fell with a crash. There was an uproar of applause; but the youth, as if he had just woke up, rubbed his eyes and looked at the sunlight, and was ashamed, because all eyes were turned on him. And from that day he gave up riotous living, and was a serious

¹ Philostr., *Vit. Apollon.* vi. 11, p. 112.

² *Ibid.* iv. 20. 72.

dévoué of philosophy, and a pupil of Philostratus. This story also is given in a context which shows that Damis was the original teller of it. It illustrates the early Christian belief that statues and idols were inhabited and possessed by evil spirits.

It is astonishing that even critical writers, like Baur and A. Reville, have suggested that these tales were composed by Philostratus in imitation of the Gospel narrative. It is true that Hierocles, the persecutor of the Christians at the end of the third century, casting about for a cult and a demi-god to play off against Christ and Christianity, pitched upon Apollonius. But no careful reader of the work of Philostratus, composed nearly a hundred years earlier, can entertain such a notion. If these anecdotes were drawn from Damis, as the context serves to show, they must have been originally penned before 100 A. D., at the very time when, and in the very localities in which, the Gospel was shaping itself out of oral traditions of Jesus. Unfortunately, we have not got the actual memoirs of Damis, and only know them through the references which Philostratus gives to them; but Eusebius, who probably had access to them, does not suggest that either Damis or Philostratus had any idea in composing them of imitating Christ's miracles. He is indeed sceptical about some of the miracles¹ related of Apollonius, but is far from accusing Philostratus of having coined them. On the contrary, he ascribes them by implication to the inventiveness of Damis the Syrian, when he blames, as he does, Philostratus for not having followed the more sober biography of Apollonius, composed by Moeragenes. Nor does Eusebius for long maintain this critical attitude, so unusual to him, in regard to the demon stories; for he ends by candidly admitting² that they were true, and argues that Apollonius really worked miracles, but by infernal means only. He had merely ejected lesser demons with the aid of a greater one. If, then, there is

Trustworthi-
ness of
Philostratus.

¹ Euseb. in *Hierocl.* 432.

² *Ibid.* 456, 457, 459.

a certain resemblance between the miracles of Apollonius and those of the Gospel narratives, it is assuredly due to the fact that the evangelists, like Damis, were Syro-Greeks. It should be further observed in confirmation of this view that there is a very close resemblance between Philostratus' story of the demon that threw down a statue as it went out of the youth, and that told by Josephus of the demon that tipped over a basin of water in its exit. This, and not any Gospel miracle, is therefore the nearest analogue. And this resemblance to Josephus demonstrates not only that Philostratus had no thought of imitating the New Testament, which there is no reason to suppose he had ever read, but that the tale, though only preserved in the pages of the later rhetorician, may yet date from the first century. And if Damis, a Syro-Greek follower of Apollonius, had such things to tell of his own master; why should not the followers of Jesus, also Syro-Greeks, have told similar stories of him? I believe that if the memoirs of Damis could be recovered, they would go farther to establish the antiquity and *bona fides* of the evangelistic records than all the apologetic commentaries ever written.

We have seen how, during the first three centuries of our era, Pagans and Christians vied with one another in credulity; and this monotony of superstition forms a dark background over which, in the latter half of the second century, there suddenly flashes out, like summer lightning, the wit and good sense of the single rationalist writer of that long period, whose works remain to us.

I refer to Lucian of Samosata, who, being born about 130 A.D., was exactly a contemporary of Irenaeus. This writer, in a dialogue entitled "Philopseudes, or the Lover of Lies," has satirized with the most subtle irony the faith, so general in his age, in magic cures and in demonic agencies of every kind. He begins with an ironical defence of the old classical myths, which, as having inspired much that was beautiful in art and poetry, were respectable in comparison with

Lucian, the
Voltaire of
the second
century.

what was believed in his own age. "And what would become of Hellas," he asks, "if you took away the halo with which these myths surround her? Why, the *cicerones* would die of starvation, for the visitors they show around would not care to hear the truth, even if they paid nothing for the privilege." Substitute Palestine for Hellas, and a modern Syrian dragoman for the ancient *periegetes*, and how much of truth, old and new, have we not in this remark?

The scene of the dialogue is laid in a sick-room, and His dialogue, there are present, the physician Antigonus, and Philopseudes, a long-bearded philosopher Eucrates, and one Ion. A remedy is propounded to ease the pain in the sick man's legs. It is this: Take with the left hand off the ground the tooth of a field-mouse killed in a particular way; tie it into the skin of a lion just flayed off, and wrap it round the legs, accompanying each action with the proper incantation.

Lucian hints a doubt whether even the Nemean lion's skin would be much use. And why, he asks, should a fever or a swelling be afraid of a miraculous name or a formula uttered in a barbarous tongue, and forthwith run away out of the groin? Are not such remedies old wives' tales? The answer made by Dinomachus, the champion of the superstition impugned, is one not peculiar to the second century: "If you don't believe that cures are wrought by means of holy names (*ιερώων ὀνομάτων*), why, then you must be an atheist." Lucian is not convinced; so to confute the sceptic, another interlocutor recounts a cure which he had himself witnessed. His gardener had been stung on the big toe by a viper, and was lying down and like to die. A Babylonian was fetched, who set the sick man on his legs at once, and drove the poison out of his body with a certain incantation, and by merely tying to his foot a bit of stone chipped out of the tomb of a dead virgin.

This is the first allusion I know of in literature to the

efficacy of the relics of a dead saint, though we have, of course, in Acts¹ much earlier testimony to the virtues inherent in handkerchiefs or aprons taken from the body of a live one.

Ion follows up this experience with a still better one.

The Chal-
daean and
the snakes. There was a field infested by reptiles. The same Chaldaean came at dawn and pronounced over it, out of an ancient book, certain names hieratic in character and seven in number. At the same time he purified the ground with a sulphur torch, going round it thrice. Out marched the serpents many, and asps and vipers, and horned snakes and adders, and toads and bullfrogs; all except one old dragon, who from age could not creep out, or else did not hear aright the summons to quit. But the magus knew that one was left in; so he chose out the youngest snake and sent him to fetch the old one, who thereupon came forth in a trice. And when they were all mustered, the Babylonian blew upon them, and they were all burned up in a second by his breath, to the astonishment of the bystanders. "And please tell me, interrupts Lucian, how did the old dragon manage? Did the young serpent, sent back as ambassador, lead him by the hand, or had he a walking-stick to help him along?"

Then another of the faithful recites what he had seen, namely, a certain Hyperborean sage walking on the sea in his native brogues, and floating in the air; not to mention the demons which he could bring up, and the stale corpses which he called back to life.

Lucian is still incredulous. "What then," asks Ion, "do you say to those who rid the possessed of their bogies (*δαιμόνων*), and who so manifestly exorcise or 'sing out' (*ἐξάδοντες*) the spectres (*φασμάτων*)? I need not," he goes on, "speak of what I have seen myself; for is not every one familiar with the Syrian from Palestine who is an expert in these

The
exorcism
of the
possessed.

¹ Acts xix. 12.

matters? Think of how many people he gets hold of, who swoon with the moon and roll their eyes and foam at the mouth, and yet he sets them on their legs and sends them away all right, provided he is well paid for getting rid of their ills. For so soon as he stands over them, as they lie on the ground, and asks whence they came when they entered the body, the sick man himself says nothing, but the demon answers in Greek or in a barbarous tongue, and says where he is from, and how and why he entered into the man. Then the Syrian brings his exorcisms into play, and if the demon does not obey, he threatens him, and so drives him out. Why, I myself saw one go out whose complexion was black and of the colour of smoke."

"Oh, that's nothing!" answers Lucian. "Why you, Ion, can even see the ideas of your father Plato, which are a very dim spectacle to my weak eyes."

We recall the title, "The Black One," applied by Barnabas to the Devil; we recall Tertullian's demons that blushed with shame when the Christians cast them out; we think of the dragon in Revelations, of the miracles of Lazarus,

Did Lucian of the Gadarene, and others. And at first sight
 assail we are inclined to suppose that the shafts of
 Christian Lucian's satire are directed against Christianity.
 super-
 stition?

The magician blows on the reptiles as Christ blew on his disciples, and as Christian priests and exorcists blew upon catechumens and others from whom demons had to be ejected¹. Not only this, but the Syrian from Palestine consumes them with his breath as Christ was to consume the anti-Christ. The possessed in Lucian lie down on the ground to be exorcised, even as they were cast upon the earth by the demons of the Gospel, and as they also lay down in the exorcistic ritual of the Church². But our inference would be too hasty, for the blowing was

¹ So Cyril Hierem. (*Catech.* I. c. v. p. 18) prays that his catechumens may be blessed, whether they had been blown upon or exorcised (*καὶ ἐμφυσήθῃς καὶ ἐπορκισθῇς*).

² See the *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, art. Exorcism.

the regular way of driving out evil spirits. You blew in a good spirit and the bad ones made off. Hence the luckiness of a sneeze among all races, civilized or savage, for it is a symptom that you are full of good spirits; just as with Porphyry, internal wind betokens an evil spirit inside one's stomach. Celsus, so Origen informs us¹, had seen quacks in the public places of Alexandria selling for a few pence their august formulae (*μαθήματα*), and driving out demons from men, and *blowing away diseases* (*νόσους ἀποφυσῶντας*), and calling up the shades of heroes, and feasting their dupes on course after course of imaginary viands. If Celsus *saw* all this, why could not Lucian his contemporary satirize it? To see in his satire, as many have done, a covert attack on Christianity, is absurd. But even if it were without the parallel testimony of Celsus, the context in Lucian would of itself assure us that he is assailing not the Christians but the Neo-Platonists.

It is true that a few pages further on, when Antigonus Raising of the dead. declares that he knew a man who had risen from the dead twenty days after his burial, and that he had attended him professionally both before his death and after his resurrection, we are tempted to see an allusion to the story told by Irenaeus and also to that of Lazarus. But there is no real reason why we should. People rose from the dead with some frequency in those times, and the *ὑστερόποτοι*, or persons who had come back to life, were so numerous that the right mode of their re-entry into their properties had to be regulated by custom. They were to come back through a hole in the roof, and not through the gates or doors. There is a certain class of critics who insist upon seeing in any history of a demon exorcised or of a dead man raised to life, no matter who the writer, an imitation of and a covert attack on the Gospel miracles. If they only read a little further they would realize that such incidents were extremely common in almost any age except our own.

¹ *C. Cels.* i. 68.

Let me close my chapter upon pagan demonology with the delightful story of the Demon of Temessa, told by Pausanias (bk. vi. p. 184 of ed. 1583).

After the fall of Troy, Ulysses was driven by the winds from one to another of the cities of Italy and Sicily, and in the course of his wanderings touched at Temessa also. There one of his sailors ravished a virgin after intoxicating her with drink; and the citizens, to avenge the insult, stoned him to death. Ulysses left the outrage unpunished and departed; but the shade of his murdered companion continued to rage against the inhabitants of Temessa of all ages, so that they at last thought of quitting their country to escape from the pest. Before taking this final step they consulted the Pythian Apollo, who in an oracle bade them appease the hero and, consecrating a site, raise a temple to him. They were moreover, to devote to the dead hero, year by year, the most beautiful they could find of their virgins. This they proceeded to do, and thenceforth they went unmolested. It happened, however, one day, that a man named Euthymus came to their city, just when the usual sacrifice was being offered to the god. And they say that when he heard of it, he asked to be allowed to enter the temple. There he beheld the girl, and at first he pitied her, but soon his pity turned to love; and the girl promised that she would be his if he saved her. So he seized his arms and did battle with the demon, overcame him, and drove him beyond the walls and out of the territory; and the demon, thus banished from the company of men, drowned himself in the sea. "And they relate, continues Pausanias, that after the entire city was thus delivered from the foulest of calamities, Euthymus had a very splendid wedding. And about this Euthymus, he says, I have myself learned from very ancient monuments that he lived to a great old age, and did not die after all, but ceased to be a man in some other way. Temessa is still inhabited up to my day, so I heard from a merchant who

had sailed thither. All this I only heard, says Pausanias in conclusion; but what follows I know, because I saw it in a picture, which in turn was a copy of an old picture. The picture represented a youth of Sybara, and the river Calatrus, the spring Calyce; and there was Hera as well, and the town of Temessa, and among these was the demon whom Euthymus cast out. And in colour he was awfully black (*δεινὸς μέλας*), and his appearance altogether most awful. But he wore for raiment a wolf's skin, and his name was given in letters on the picture as Lybas." Pausanias wrote soon after the middle of the second century; but Strabo, who died A.D. 25, glances (p. 255) at the same legend. The demon terribly black is already familiar to us in the epistle of St. Barnabas.

Tatian, who was a pupil of Justin Martyr, and flourished about A.D. 150-180, is our first explicit witness to the existence of all four Gospels, of which he made a concordance. In his address to the Greeks, he seems to incline to a rather more material view of the nature of demons than most of the early Fathers. "The Demons," he writes¹, "so called by the Greeks, are composed of matter (*hulé*), and have acquired therefrom spirit (*pneuma*). They are dissolute and greedy beings." But he does not consistently maintain this view; for in the next sentence he admits that some of them have turned towards what is purer (i.e. in matter), and that not all turn toward that which is inferior, and adapt their conduct thereunto. "These demons," he continues, "you Greeks worship; and they are generated out of matter, but far removed from its true order. For through their own wickedness they became vainglorious, and taking the bit between their teeth, they were eager to become stealers of the godhead. But the Lord of all allows them to plume themselves, only until the present world (*kosmos*) reaches its term and is destroyed, and the Judge comes."

And after a little, Tatian writes in a way which enables

¹ *Ad. Gr.* 255.

us to understand the animism of the Gospels. "There is," he declares, "a spirit in the stars, a spirit in the angels, a spirit in plants and waters, a spirit in men, a spirit in animals. It is one and the same spirit, but it has differences in itself."

Further on in the treatise (p. 257), Tatian has more to tell of the nature of demons. They have, he says, no flesh at all; but their composition is spiritual (*πνευματική*), like that of fire or of air. Demons have not flesh. And only those who are under the protection of the Spirit of God can easily behold the bodily nature of demons. Other men, namely the psychics (*psuchikoi*), cannot see them¹. For the lesser cannot rise to a comprehension of the greater.

The demons cannot repent, being emanations or rather radiations of matter and wickedness. Nor are they not souls of those demons who impose commands on men dead men. the souls of deceased men. For the latter will not gain through death gifts of power and insight which they had not when alive in the body. No; demons to please their own ill-will revel like Bacchants inside men, and pervert our depraved and sunken wills with various lies as if we were puppets, in order to frustrate our attempts to soar upwards to heaven. Psychics also, he goes on to admit, can see demons, but only if the latter reveal themselves, in order to impose on their dupes, so that they may be worshipped by them as being something better than they really are. If they could, the demons would drag down heaven itself in their own ruin. But this, being made of inferior and lower matter, they cannot do. They are only able to take credit to themselves for causing diseases and dissensions in the matter (*hulé*) within us, by assailing us whenever we are ill. Sometimes, however, they of themselves disturb by the hurricane of their own wickedness the state of our bodies. But in such cases they will depart in fear if we Possession.

¹ Cp. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

smite them with the recital of God's power. In such a manner the sick man is to be healed.

Let me sum up the points of chief importance in these records of demonological belief and practice
Summary. among the pagans.

1. As early as the fourth century B. C., Xenocrates and Chrysippus, Empedocles and Theophrastus, taught that there were evil demons as well as good ones. These evil ones were often the departed spirits of bad men, and were in the end to be punished and so purified. They, and not the true gods, delighted in the sacrifice of live animals.

2. The evil stories related of the gods were in reality true, not of the gods, but only of bad demons. This teaching we meet with not only in these older writers, but in Dionysius of Halicarnassus¹, who died B. C. 7. It was really meant as an attempt on the part of pious Greeks to purge their religious stories of the gross immoralities which disfigured them. But in the hands of Christian apologists it became a weapon against the entire fabric of the older religion. The gods of the heathen were evil demons, and therefore it was that they committed these immoralities. As R. Heinze truly remarks², the substitution by the Christians of evil demons for the ancient gods was suggested and grew out of the old Greek philosophy itself.

3. There are indications in Plutarch, who was born about 40 A. D., of the exorcism of demons by the use of names. Lucian's dialogues prove that in the second century the use of names was very common. Moreover, the Ephesian formulae, already mentioned by Aristotle, were exorcisms.

4. Except, however, in popular language, there is little notice taken in pagan writers of demoniacal possession before the first century A. D. After that century it is extremely common; and literary pagans of the second and third centuries held practically the same beliefs as

¹ Dionys., *Halic.* ii. 47.

² *Xenocrates*, p. 116.

the Christian writers who were their contemporaries. Concurrently with Christianity, itself in a Roman's eyes a Syrian superstition, there was a diffusion over the Greek and Roman worlds of oriental demonological beliefs akin to the Christian.

5. The pagans, like Celsus, were in a sense less of heathens than Origen, in that their view of nature was less sombre. Celsus¹ attributed less influence to evil demons, and consequently more to good ones, and to the Almighty God, whose agents the good demons are. God, he held, could not be injured, and was pleased when honour was rendered to good demons. We must not forget to be grateful to the good demons, because there are bad ones. The objectionable element in ancient myths he regarded as mere poetic lies, and he was in this respect less superstitious than the Christian Fathers who condemned, yet believed, such myths.

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¹ *C. Cels.* viii. 66, 33; iv. 33.